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ABSTRACT

Reassessment of institutional programs and policies that affect minorities is needed to bring some order, understanding, and renewed energy to practices that influence institutions' commitments to equal educational opportunity for all persons. This guide to self-study focuses on: (1) undergraduate admissions and recruitment; (2) financial aid; (3) counseling, support services, and placement; (4) curriculum; (5) environment; (6) graduate and professional programs; (7) faculty and staff hiring, evaluation, and retention; and (8) administrative policies. (Author/KE)

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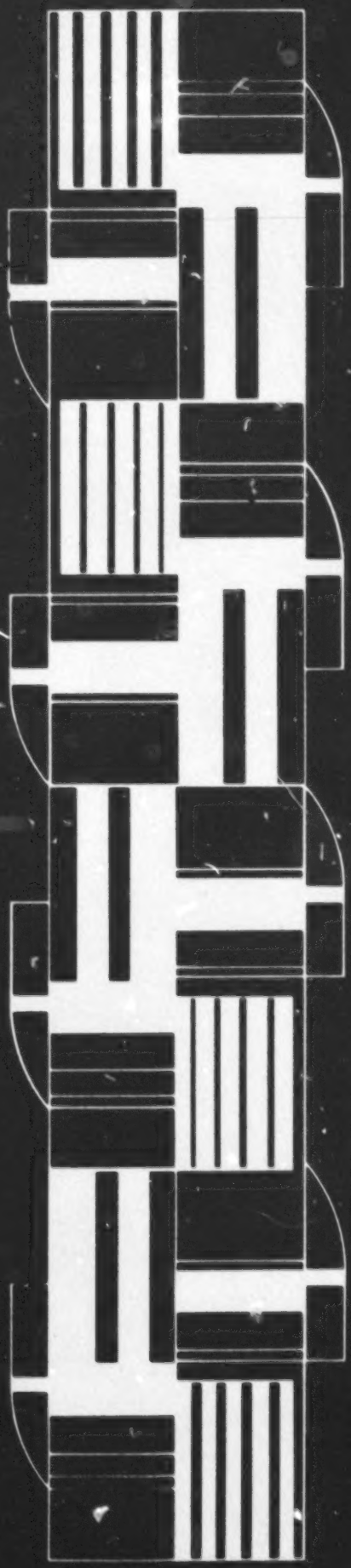

FRAMEWORK FOR EVALUATING INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENT TO MINORITIES

A GUIDE TO INSTITUTIONAL SELF STUDY

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EDUCATION

Framework
for
Evaluating Institutional Commitment
to
Minorities

AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EDUCATION
ONE DUPONT CIRCLE

WASHINGTON, D.C.

March 1976

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AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EDUCATION

Roger W. Heyns, *President*

The American Council on Education, founded in 1918 and composed of institutions of higher education and national and regional education associations, is the nation's major coordinating body for postsecondary education. Through voluntary and cooperative action, the Council provides comprehensive leadership for improving educational standards, policies, and procedures.

FOREWORD

The American Council on Education staff is under instruction from the ACE Board of Directors to devote specific attention to policies and programs that affect minorities in postsecondary education. To help the staff identify problems of minorities, the Council convened a group of experts whose experiences include studying and planning programs to accommodate minority students at higher education institutions. Most of these education professionals are themselves minorities. The participants were asked to discuss policies and programs and speak to the adequacy of institutional, associational, and governmental responses to the needs of minorities. The meeting was a planning session during which problems were identified and assigned priorities, and solutions were suggested. The "Discussion of Minority Issues and Governmental Strategies" took place on April 29-30, 1975, at the ACE in Washington, D.C. A summary of discussions, including recommendations, was made available to the ACE membership and the public shortly after the meeting.

The Discussion participants affirmed that many shortcomings in institutional policies and programs affecting minorities stem from inadequate understanding by administrators, students, and faculty of overall institutional objectives directed toward providing equal educational opportunity. All participants agreed that the academic, administrative, and support functioning of higher education institutions could be improved in this regard through effecting changes suggested by a thorough evaluation of institutional influences on minorities. The group therefore recommended that the American Council on Education construct "an instrument for assessing institutional responses to minority concerns."

The project to devise the *Framework for Evaluating Institutional Commitment to Minorities* was initiated by the ACE in direct response to the Discussion group's recommendation. A small Planning Group, composed of persons with professional experience in higher education institutions and associations, and in government, was assembled as staff. Early drafts of the *Framework* were reviewed by persons at institutions and associations and in government. The Planning Group members interviewed the reviewers as part of the refinement process. Subsequent drafts were reviewed by the American Council on Education Commissions on Academic Affairs and on Women in Higher Education, the American Council on Education Board of Directors, and the participants in A Discussion of Minority Interests and Governmental Strategies. Suggestions from the reviewers are accommodated in the published version of the *Framework*.

Roger W. Heyns, President

FRAMEWORK FOR EVALUATING INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENT TO MINORITIES

A Discussion of Minority Issues and Governmental Strategies

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FRAMEWORK FOR EVALUATING INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENT TO MINORITIES

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The American Council on Education is grateful to the Institute for the Study of Educational Policy and the National Board on Graduate Education for the participation by their staff members in devising this document.

FRAMEWORK FOR EVALUATING INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENT TO MINORITIES

Design, Purpose, and Use

The immediate objective of the *Framework* is to promote reassessment of institutional programs and policies that affect minorities. The broader goal is to bring some order, understanding, and renewed energy to practices that influence institutions' commitments to equal educational opportunity for all persons.

Design

In drafting the *Framework* the planners made no attempt to define performance standards for institutions. Rather, a question format was adopted in an effort to stimulate discussions within the setting of programs, facilities, goals, and personnel at each institution. Most questions are worded in a manner that is far less prescriptive than descriptive. Only persons at individual institutions should decide, in broad consensus, on the meanings of such words as "effective," "adequate," and "proper." The responsibility for setting standards of performance rests solely with the administrators, faculty members, and students for whom the *Framework* was created.

Purpose

The *Framework* is not a survey questionnaire. It is intended as a stimulus for self-assessment, evaluation, and change. Follow up studies will primarily emphasize the *use* of the *Framework* and other methods of institutional self-evaluation.

Use

The self-evaluation process depends for its success on a positive commitment from the institutional leadership and participation by the entire institution. Even by briefly studying the *Framework* one may see that no single person or office should or could undertake the evaluation process. The planners therefore suggest using the *Framework* as a guide for a group (or groups) of persons appointed by the institutional leaders for the purpose of evaluation. The headings of the various sections of the *Framework* suggest the institutional sectors that require representation in an evaluation procedure. For example:

Framework Section	*Suggested Reviewing Personnel*
I	Admissions Staff
II	Financial Aid Staff
III	Counseling, Educational Opportunity Program, Learning Skills, and Placement Staffs
IV	Department Heads, Academic Affairs Staff
V	Student Government, Student Affairs Staff, Student Organization Representatives, Community Service Staff
VI	Graduate Department Heads, Graduate School, and Professional School Staffs
VII	Affirmative Action Officers, Minority Faculty Members
VIII	Institutional Head, Trustees, Institutional Research and Planning Staff

The above list reveals overlaps and gaps in responsibility and interests among the personnel assigned to review the sections of the *Framework*. Again, the characteristics of the individual institution will dictate the appropriate makeup for an evaluative body. Nevertheless, at most institutions a coordinator must be assigned to the evaluation project to assure that a comprehensive self-study is effected. The role of this person (or office) is crucial to the conduct of a thorough examination of institutional influences on minorities.

In the long run, any self-evaluation depends for its success on the changes it suggests and provokes. The major assumption by the planners of the *Framework* is that it will be used by persons of good-will who are committed not only to principle but also to action. This guide to self-study can initiate no more change than its users are willing and able to produce.

FRAMEWORK FOR EVALUATING INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENT TO MINORITIES

I. Undergraduate Admissions and Recruitment

Suggested Reviewers: Admissions Staff

A. Does the institution have a means of identifying minority persons interested in training offered by the institution? Is the method effective?

B. What is the nature of the relationships between institutional student recruitment personnel and counselors at secondary schools having large minority student enrollments?

C. Are there institutional means for facilitating the recruitment of minorities for disciplines in which they are under represented? Do these strategies include making special funds for recruitment, financial aid, and retention techniques available for these efforts? To what extent have the methods changed the distribution of minority students among the various disciplines?

D. Are admissions decisions on minority applicants made by persons who have sufficient experience and contact with minority student candidates to understand the special characteristics of their backgrounds, needs, and interests?

E. Are all applicants for admission judged by flexible criteria? How flexible are the criteria? (Can admissions staff give less weight to test scores for students whose secondary school records and other data show promise?)

F. Are information and materials made available to applicants which present an accurate picture of program requirements and campus life? What is the impact of the materials on student decisions to attend? Are minority students, faculty, and administrators consulted in an attempt to assess whether the overall image transmitted reflects the experience of minority students at the institution?

G. How does the proportion of minorities in the student body relate to the proportion of minorities in the geographical region(s) from which the institution mainly draws its students?

H. How does the proportion of minority students admitted under standard admissions criteria compare with the proportion of academically high risk minority students admitted? How closely are these proportions related to the institution's programs, purposes, and goals in student academic support?

II. Financial Aid

Suggested Reviewers: Financial Aid Staff

A. What priority is given in the use of institutional (non federal) student financial aid funds to supplementing student assistance from federal sources and providing full support for needy students?

B. What emphasis is given to ensuring that campus work assignments directly complement the student's educational program and career interests? Is this aspect of the financial aid package routinely evaluated for its effects on minority students? What changes in work assignment procedures have resulted from such evaluations?

C. Is it institutional policy to remind students that they must, and when they must, apply for financial aid? Is the reminder effective in obtaining on time applications from minority students? Is it necessary to keep funds in reserve for late applicants?

D. Are special packages (combinations of programs) of student financial aid offered to educationally disadvantaged and minority students? What means are used to determine the adequacy of the aid package in relation to the student's real needs?

E. Has a routine institutional procedure been devised to allow increases in an individual's financial aid package, should the need arise during the school session? Are discretionary funds available for emergency loans?

F. Are special technical assistance and counseling in budgeting matters given, as a matter of policy, to financially disadvantaged and minority students? How effective is this guidance in increasing the size and number of individual financial aid awards?

III. Counseling, Support Services, Placement

Suggested Reviewers: Counseling, Equal Opportunity Program, Learning Skills, and Placement Staffs

A. Is there an institutional effort to cooperate with secondary school administrators and counselors in increasing the scope and effectiveness of professional guidance? In this context, how are the particular guidance needs of minority students from various cultural backgrounds addressed? Are personnel at schools having substantial numbers of minority students involved in the process?

B. How much emphasis is placed on intensive early freshman orientation and preregistration counseling for minorities? Are these programs important factors in retention of minority students? Is peer counseling used in the programs, and how useful is it?

C. How important a role does career counseling (including guidance on graduate education) play in the design of institutional student support mechanisms? Do minority students use these support mechanisms advantageously?

D. Is there an institutionwide attempt to ensure that the academic advisors assigned to minorities are sensitive to the emotional and academic needs and the cultural backgrounds of the minority student, especially during the first year of involvement with the institution? How is the effectiveness of the assignments monitored?

E. Are the study skills remediation and tutorial services provided by the institution commensurate with demand and need? Are *all* educationally disadvantaged students encouraged to attend these special programs? How, and how early, are students who need these services identified?

F. Do stigmas attach to students who participate in remediation programs? Is there an institutional effort to address this problem?

G. Are there support service courses (remedial, learning skills courses) for which academic credit should be awarded?

H. Are support programs that provide services to minority students staffed by regular faculty or by persons outside the regular tenure track? How is the competency of the staff judged, and how are high performance levels rewarded?

I. Do the directors of support service programs participate in administrative decisions that affect the students served by the programs? How influential is the advice of the directors? How are student insights obtained to inform these decisions?

J. What methods are used at the institution to measure students' academic progress and assess the effectiveness of support service courses? Does the institution administer academic competency programs or tests? How much is known about the academic progress of minority students at the institution? Are special academic support services provided for students for whom English is a second language?

III. **Counseling, Support Services, Placement** (continued)

K. Are remedial programs provided for undergraduates who fail to qualify by testing, or whose grade point averages are insufficient for admission to graduate or professional school? What influences do the programs have on later attendance at graduate and professional schools by minority undergraduates?

L. What aid is given to students in finding summer employment? What stress is placed on fitting summer employment experiences to the student's academic interest? Do minority students use the summer placement programs fully?

M. How is the institution's placement office monitored to ensure that minority students are treated with fairness, both in temporary student employment and in contacts with recruiters from business, government and industry? How are minority students encouraged to use the placement system? Are placement records of minority students maintained?

N. Can and should career counseling, academic advising, and placement functions be better coordinated throughout the institution? How has this matter been addressed by the personnel directly involved and by the responsible administrators?

IV. Curriculum

Suggested Reviewers: Department Heads, Academic Affairs Staff

A. How is the regular curriculum assessed for adequacy in study and analysis of works by minority authors and works focusing on minority concerns and experience? Are adequate means available for introducing more works of these kinds into the curriculum?

B. Do the institution's libraries and bookstores regularly carry publications by minority authors and publications devoted to minority issues? How is the completeness of inventories in this area verified?

C. How are changes in curriculum and teaching methods assessed to determine their influences on the education of minority students? Are the educational needs and interests of minority students used as the bases for revisions in curriculum and teaching methods? By what means are these needs and interests explored?

D. Is there an institutional mechanism for assessing the amount of undergraduate and graduate research being conducted on minority concerns? How can research of this type be encouraged?

E. How closely related are the subject matter and teaching methods of the regular curriculum to the subject matter and teaching methods of support service courses?

F. How successful are teaching techniques in support service courses introduced into the regular curriculum? How are faculty members encouraged to develop skill in using effective techniques?

G. How accepted, stable, and integral are ethnic and cultural studies at the institution? Are ethnic studies offerings properly publicized?

V. Environment

Suggested Reviewers: Student Government, Student Affairs Staff, Student Organization Representatives, Community Service Staff

A. Are studies conducted on the causes of undergraduate and graduate attrition of minority students? Are the factors that influence minority student attrition fundamentally the same as or different from those affecting the majority?

B. How much emphasis has been placed on developing institutionwide procedures to improve minority student persistence? What are the roles of administrative staff and department heads in this process?

C. Are minority students eligible for all scholastic honors awarded at the institution? How does the proportion of scholastic honors awarded to minorities compare with the proportion of minorities in the student body?

D. Are institutional programs conducted with department heads and faculty to reduce racially prejudiced attitudes and to increase interest in minority students and faculty? What are standard institutional responses when instances of prejudice have been detected?

E. Are there adequate and responsive complaint/grievance procedures available to all students? Do minority students use the procedures fully? Are channels available for discussing "minor" problems (negative faculty attitudes, problematic dormitory relationships, etc.) before they become factors in student decisions to withdraw? Do "major" problems (especially forms of unfair treatment) receive a full and prompt hearing and resolution?

F. How are campus organizations monitored to determine whether they are congenial to minority students and whether minorities are encouraged to participate?

G. Is there a general institutional process by which the social customs and accepted rules of conduct on campus are reviewed for their receptiveness and congeniality to minorities?

H. How much participation is there by minority students in extracurricular activities such as music and drama clubs, social clubs, debating and service groups, newspaper and yearbook staffs, and intramural sports? What efforts are being made to increase minority participation?

I. What institutional procedures ensure that student entertainment and activity programs include appropriate amounts of literature, art, music, and lectures that feature minority artists and intellectuals, and which reflect the interests of minority students?

J. Is it institutional policy to demonstrate concern for the welfare of minority communities in the region through operation of various community service programs? How are minority students and faculty involved in these programs?

VI. Graduate and Professional Programs

Suggested Reviewers: Graduate Department Heads, Graduate School Staff, Professional School Staff

A. How successful are the procedures that are used to identify minority students interested in graduate or professional training offered by the institution? Should identification methods be coordinated throughout the institution?

B. Is there agreement between the graduate school and the departments on the minimum qualifications acceptable for students recruited for graduate programs? How flexible are the criteria used to judge candidates for admission? How much restriction do existing admissions criteria place on obtaining an acceptable enrollment of minority students?

C. How much emphasis is placed on building minority student attendance in departments in which minorities are underrepresented? Are special recruitment and financial aid funds available for this purpose?

D. Are institutional policies clear on whether minorities will be assured equal treatment and nondiscrimination or be accorded compensatory or affirmative action?

E. How large a role should remediation techniques play in graduate or professional training at the institution? What effect would remedial programs have on retention of minority students?

F. How adequately are the regular student services attuned to the needs of graduate and professional students? Do minority graduate and professional students use these services fully?

G. Should special student services be available to graduate and professional students? How can minority graduate and professional students be most effectively given the support which they need in such areas as, financial counseling and aid, student employment, guidance, placement, housing services, and grievance procedures?

VII. Faculty and Staff Hiring, Evaluation, and Retention

Suggested Reviewers: Affirmative Action Officers, Minority Faculty Members

A. How does the minority representation in faculty, administration, and support staff compare with the minority representation in the student body? Is the extent of minority representation in faculty, administration, and staff consonant with the needs of minority students?

B. How effective are current institutional procedures for identifying, recruiting, and hiring minority faculty and administrators? Can these procedures be improved?

C. Do affirmative action officers have ready access to all supervisory personnel, including department heads? How much authority is carried by officers' recommendations on cases involving bias in recruitment and hiring of faculty, administration, and support staff?

D. How much input is sought from affirmative action officers when administrative decisions are made on hiring policies that do not concern equal opportunity? How much influence does the advice of officers contribute to these decisions?

E. Is a person in each department responsible for departmental affirmative action liaison with the central administration? How useful is this technique for maintaining communication on matters of policy and procedures?

F. What authority do affirmative action officers have to intervene in possible cases of bias in admissions procedures, and in recruitment and hiring procedures for students?

G. In evaluating faculty members for promotion, how much recognition is given to special duties in guidance and leadership that are frequently required of minority faculty and administrators in addition to their regular duties? In setting work loads for minority faculty and administrators how much consideration is given to these extra commitments? Are professional development and training programs provided by the institution to aid the upward mobility of minority faculty, administrators, and staff?

H. Are minority faculty and administrators encouraged to understand that they are accepted as integral parts of the institutional community through adequate participation in campus committees and other forms of appointed or elected governance? How aware is the institutional leadership of the perceptions of minority faculty regarding the congeniality, respect, and need of the other institutional personnel for their professional services? What positive roles do the institutional leaders play in fostering acceptance of minority personnel?

VIII. Administrative Policies

Suggested Reviewers: Institutional Head, Trustees, Institutional Research and Planning Staff

A. What is the balance between "soft money" and "hard money" in the overall funding of programs that are influential in attaining equal opportunity objectives? Is this a desirable long term balance?

B. How much priority is given to operating budget items for programs and staff to meet equal opportunity goals at the central administration and department levels? In this context, to what degree is consideration given to support services, including required increases in faculty contact time with students?

C. Where are student support services placed in the institutional governance structure, and what factors determine their placement? Are the services that focus on minority student access and persistence placed in the most stable and influential sector of the governance structure?

D. How much information is routinely collected on minority students concerning the applicant pool, admission rates, major fields of study, transfer among disciplines, and persistence and graduation rates? Are the amount and kinds of information collected commensurate with the needs for policy decisions?

E. To what extent are attempts made in the conduct and analysis of institutional research, and in data collections on students and staff, to examine minority concerns through use of appropriate categories and issues? How is minority advice on these concerns solicited? Are the distinctive concerns of various minority groups handled in ways that are appropriate to their differences?

F. How are institutional data on minority students and staff distributed among staff and planners, particularly whenever policy decisions that affect the status of minorities are being made? Do the appropriate data regularly receive the widest distribution necessary?

G. What is the nature of interchange between institutional personnel and representatives of any minority communities served and affected by the institution? What mechanisms exist for obtaining advice from members of the minority community about programs that directly or indirectly interact with the community?

H. How many minorities in the administration have high level positions and regular line responsibilities? How strong are their influences on administrative policy decisions that affect the welfare of minority students, faculty, and staff? Do the upper echelon minority administrators have ready access to the institutional head and a proper access to the board of trustees?

I. How clear an understanding do the institutional leaders—board of trustees, institutional head, and upper echelon administrators—have of the problem areas in the institutional response to minorities? Do they feel that they are performing satisfactory jobs in assisting minorities toward equal educational opportunity at the institution?

J. How is the status of minority participation in the entire institution regularly reviewed? How are student and faculty inputs obtained?